

Message Text

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TAGS: PINS, BL

SUBJ: LEFTIST PLOTTERS ARRESTED IN OURURO

1. SUMMARY: THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR ANNOUNCED THE DETENTION ON JULY 12 OF 30 PERSONS INCLUDING 27 "DEPOSED LEFTISTS" (LABOR, AGRICULTURAL, FACTORY AND STUDENT LEADERS) AND THREE SPANISH NUNS. ACCORDING TO MINISTER PEREDA'S STATEMENT OF JULY 14 THE 30 WERE ARRESTED WHILE PARTICIPATING IN A CLANDESTINE POLITICAL MEETING IN A CHURCH RESIDENCE IN ORURO, WITH THE PURPOSE OF PLANNING MEASURES TO BRING ABOUT SOCIAL UNREST IN THE COUNTRY DURING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS SCHEDULED FOR EARLY AUGUST. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE ON JULY 14 MINISTER PEREDA STATED THAT THOSE ARRESTED WERE MEMBERS OF THE CLANDESTINE CONFEDERATION OF BOLIVIAN WORKERS (CENTRAL OBRERO BOLIVIANO) WHO WERE MEETING TO APPROVE SUBVERSIVE PLANS MEANT TO PROVIDE SOCIAL CHAOS THROUGH DISTURBANCES RESULTING FROM A CONFRONTATION WITH THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER, THUS PROVIDING THE EXCUSE FOR A GENERAL STRIKE CALL. THE CONFISCATED AGENDA OF THE MEETING UNCLASSIFIED

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ALLEGEDLY CALLED FOR ANALYSES OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE AUGUST 1971 REVOLUTION AND DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ALLIANCES WITH SUCH INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS AS THE CENTRAL UNICA DE TRABAJADORES (CUT) OF CHILE, THE CENTRAL DE TRABAJADORES ARGENTINOS (CCT) AND THE FRENTE REVOLUCIONARIO ANTI-IMPERIALISTA (FRA). IT ALSO CONTAINED A PROPOSED CALL FROM THE COB TO ALL PATRIOTIC AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE HEROES OF BOLIVIAN INDEPENDENCE, WHILE REPUDIATING ALL INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS PREPARED BY THE "DICTATORSHIP". MINISTER PEREDA STATED THAT THE CONTENT OF THE AGENDA, THE CLANDESTINE NATURE OF THE MEETING AND THE PAST RECORDS OF THE PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED THEM WITH RECENT AGITATION IN UNIVERSITY AND LABOR CIRCLES. HE CONTINUED THAT THE ARRESTS MADE IN ORURO DO NOT SIGNIFY THE COMPLETE DISMANTLING OF THE PLOT BUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS IN POSSESSION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION WHICH WILL LEAD TO FUTURE ARRESTS AND PERMIT IT TO MAINTAIN CIVIL ORDER WHILE PURSUING PLANS FOR THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT. THE MINISTER GAVE OUT A LIST OF THOSE ARRESTED WHICH INCLUDED THE GOVERNMENT'S DESCRIPTION OF THEIR PAST SUBVERSIVE RECORDS. ACCORDING TO THE BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION PRESENTED, THEY RANGE FROM PRO-SOVIET COMMUNISTS, TO MAOISTS, TO COMPATRIOTS AND FOLLOWERS OF CHE GUEVARA AND OTHER GUERRILLA GROUPS. A NUMBER OF THEM HAD BEEN EXILED FOR PAST ACTIVITIES AND HAVE RETURNED TO THE COUNTRY CLANDESTINELY, WHILE OTHERS HAD PREVIOUSLY GONE UNDERGROUND TO AVOID ARREST.

3. ACCORDING TO PEREDA ONE OF THE THREE NUNS ARRESTED WAS IN POSSESSION OF A LARGE SUM OF DOLLARS SUPPOSEDLY EAR-MARKED TO FUNANCE THE GROUP'S ACTIVITIES. THE NUNS ARE PRESENTLY BEING DETAINED IN LA PAZ, AS ARE THE REST OF THE GROUP, AND THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION CONCERNING THEIR PARTICIPATION WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE BOLIVIAN CHURCH'S HIERARCHY FOR CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO ACTION BEING TAKEN AGAINST THEM. IN A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BANZER JULY 14, CARDINAL MAURER RETIERATED THE THEME OF RESPECT FOR CHURCH PREMISES. THE BISHOP OF THE ORURO DIOCESE HAD PREVIOUSLY PROTESTED THE RAID IN VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S EXISTING AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT THAT IT BE INFORMED PRIOR TO ANY ACTION OF THIS

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NATURE INVOLVING CHURCH PROPERTY OR PERSONNEL. GOB HAS MADE A POINT OF STATING TO THE PRESS THAT THE NUNS ARE BEING GIVEN DEFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN THE WOMEN'S PRISON.

4. THE MORNING NEWSPAPERS ON JULY 18 CARRIED A REPORT FROM RELIGIOUS SOURCES THAT THE THREE NUNS WILL BE EXPELLED FROM BOLIVIA NEXT TUESDAY. ACCORDING TO THE

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS, THE NUNS TESTIFIED BEFORE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AND THE VICAR GENERAL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LA PAZ THAT THEY HAD ONLY AGREED TO PREPARE A MEAL AND SERVE AT WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS TO BE A MEETING OF "CATHOLIC WORKERS", THAT THE \$B. 700 FOUND IN THE POSSESSION OF ONE OF THEM WERE THE FUNDS PROVIDED TO PAY THE EXPENSES OF THE MEETING, AND THAT THEY HAD NO PART IN THE DISCUSSIONS. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY HAS STATED THAT NONE OF THE THREE HAS A RECORD OF PREVIOUS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

5. A NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS GROUPED IN THE EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR FAITH AND HAPPINESS (MOVIMIENTO EDUCACIONAL FE Y ALEGRIA) ISSUED A STATEMENT ON JULY 17 EXPRESSING THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE THREE NUNS AND ASKING THAT THE GOVERNMENT ESTABLISH NOT ONLY THEIR INNOCENCE OR GUILT ACCORDING TO LAW BUT OF ALL THE OTHERS ARRESTED AS WELL BEFORE PASSING JUDGMENT ON THEM. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW THIS INCIDENT WILL AFFECT CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, BUT IT APPEARS THAT THE CHURCH HIERARCHY IN BOLIVIA IS NOT GOING TO MAKE A FUSS

6. THE GOB IS BEING ESPECIALLY VIGILANT FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY IN VIEW OF THE UPCOMING SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS INVOLVING THE ATTENDANCE OF THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT AND MANY OTHER DIGNITARIES.
STEDMAN

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